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Southeastern District Health Department Reports Test Results
Idaho's State Lab Identifies E.coli Infection in Toddler Who Died

Pocatello – Additional testing conducted by the Idaho State Laboratory has identified *E. coli* O157:H7 in a sample from a southeast Idaho toddler who died last week. Kyle Allgood, 2, of Chubbuck, died at a Salt Lake City hospital September 20th of hemolytic-uremic syndrome, a kidney disease that is often caused by certain *E. coli* infections. The Idaho State Laboratory will conduct genetic testing on the samples to determine if the *E. coli* bacteria from Kyle Allgood matches the genetic strain found in an ongoing, national outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 associated with raw spinach consumption. Those genetic test results should be available late next week.

“The death of a child is very difficult and Southeastern District Health Department extends our deepest sympathies to Kyle’s family.” said Ed Marugg, District Director for the Southeastern District Health Department (SDHD). Dr. Christine Hahn, Idaho State Epidemiologist stated that this helps piece together the contributing factors of his death. With the genetic testing next week, the state lab hopes to be able to determine if Kyle was ill with the *E. coli* strain that was identified in the national outbreak associated with raw spinach.

In that outbreak, 187 people from 26 states have been infected with *E. coli* O157:H7, with almost half of those hospitalized and an elderly woman from Wisconsin dying. Kyle’s parents have reported that their son had consumed raw spinach prior to his illness. Genetic testing has linked four Idahoans who became ill due to this outbreak. They have all recovered.

The investigation of the spinach-related *E.coli* outbreak continues, with the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continue to refine their recommendations regarding the use of spinach. Until further notice, the FDA offers the following guidelines to people purchasing spinach or products that contain raw spinach:

- Do not eat any fresh spinach or salad blends containing spinach grown in the three counties in California implicated in the current *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreak -- Monterey County, San Benito County, and Santa Clara County. Spinach from these counties is often packaged in other areas of the country. If consumers cannot tell where fresh spinach was grown, they are advised not to purchase or consume the fresh spinach. Frozen and canned spinach can be safely eaten.

- *E. coli* O157:H7 in spinach can be killed by cooking at 160° Fahrenheit for 15 seconds. (Water boils at 212° Fahrenheit.) If spinach is cooked in a frying pan, and all parts do not reach 160° Fahrenheit, all bacteria may not be killed. If consumers choose to cook the spinach, they should not allow the raw spinach to contaminate other foods and food contact surfaces, and they should wash hands, utensils, and surfaces with hot, soapy water before and after handling the spinach.
- Persons who develop diarrhea after consuming fresh spinach or salad blends containing fresh spinach are urged to contact their health care provider and ask that their stool specimen be tested for *E. coli* O157. Persons who ate fresh spinach or salad blends and feel well do not need to see a health-care provider.

For more information, please contact Jeff Doerr, Epidemiologist, 208-478-6321 or Maggie Mann, Health Promotion Director, 208-243-1103, or visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov or the **Food and Drug Administration for the most current recommendations at www.fda.gov.**

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